



Your Current Reactions to Stress

Self-care can minimize your stress and act as an antidote to many of the stressors that you may face each day working at a nonprofit. Doing a candid assessment of whether you handle your stress in a productive way or destructive way can help you identify habits you need to change as part of your Self-Care Plan. This assessment comes from the University of Buffalo School of Social Work Self-Care Kit. Although the source is unknown, it is used by many nonprofits, including Crisis Text Line.

How to Use:

Put an “X” to signify “Yes” you engage in the behavior or “No” you don’t. Pay attention to any tendency you might have toward self-deception. The truth might be ugly or embarrassing, but use it as your catalyst for change.

When you are under stress, do you:	Yes	No	When you are under stress, do you:	Yes	No
Smoke/Use Tobacco			Engage in physical activity at least 3 times a week for 30 minutes		
Consume more than 2-3 cups of caffeinated drinks per day			Get 7-9 hours of sleep per night		
Drink more than 1-2 alcoholic beverages per day			Maintain healthy alcoholic drinking habits – if any		
Misuse over the counter medications			Find time to relax throughout your day/week as needed		
Misuse prescription medications			Meditate		
Participate in illegal drug use			Find different ways to manage stress		
Over or under eat			Maintain healthy eating habits		

Spend too much money			Maintain healthy ritual and routines		
Engage in risky sexual behavior			Maintain relationships with family or friends		
Sleep too much			Walk in the woods		
Have angry outbursts			Find ways to manage your anger		
Blame yourself for anything that goes wrong			Practice positive self-talk		
Overwork or underwork			Play		
Stay silent about problems			Verbalize what you're struggling with in a professional manner		
Other			Other		
NEGATIVE SELF-CARE BEHAVIORS TALLY			POSITIVE SELF-CARE BEHAVIORS TALLY		

If you answer more “Yeses” in the left column than the right column, then you are choosing to react to your stress in negative ways. Start thinking now about ways you can replace your negative stress reactions and behaviors with more positive ones. Hint: Self-care activities are a good start. The self-care checklists later in this chapter can help you identify a whole range of self-care practices available to you as alternative ways of dealing with your stress.